wheat @ Rs. 2/- per kg. The scale of allocation to all categories of population under TPDS has been enhanced to 35 kg. per family per month with effect from 1.4.2002.

Storage cost of wheat

†1596. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the storage cost of wheat, per tonne in Punjab, Haryana, U.P. and Rajasthan, separately;

(b) whether uniform storage charges are paid to all the agencies by Government all over the country; and

(c) whether this cost is even less than the storage cost of FCI in the above States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) to (c) For the Rabi Marketing Season 2002-03 a uniform storage cost @ Rs. 25.80 per tonne per month has provisionally been allowed to various States, including Punjab, Haryana. U.P. and Rajasthan which procure wheat for the Central Pool.

The above provisional storage cost allowed to the States is lower than the storage cost of FCI for storing foodgrains. However, the final rates are sanctioned to the State Governments in consultation with the respective State Governments on the basis of audited accounts of the year furnished by them after the marketing season is over.

Public distribution system offtake

1597. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the Public Distribution System offtake is restricted to six major States;

(b) whether it is a fact that about two third of Government's food subsidy comprises the transportation, storage and distribution costs;

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.